

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04
SIL-01 SAA-01 SES-02 /103 W
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R 220805Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5423
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY BANJUL POUCH
AMEMBASSY BISSAU POUCH
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAIA POUCH
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT

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PARIS FOR MURPHY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, EGEN, PINT
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION PARTY WALKS-OUT OF SENEGALESE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY BUT SAYS IT WILL RETURN

1. SUMMARY. AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE SENEGALESE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY, CALLED AUGUST 7-11 TO ENACT LEGISLATION DEALING WITH
SENEGAL'S PRESENT ECONOMIC CRISIS (SEPTEL), ALL 18 MEMBERS OF
THE OPPOSITION PARTI DEMOCRATIQUE SENEGALAIS (PDS) WALKED OUT.
THIS WAS A FIRST FOR THE PDS SINCE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN MARCH, 1978. AT A SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFER-
ENCE, OPPOSITON LEADER ABDOU LAYE WADE EXPLAINED PDS WALK-OUT,
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CHARGING THE GOVERNMENT WITH UNDEMOCRATIC PRACTICES. AMID
GROWING RUMOURS OF PRESIDENT SENGHOR'S ILL HEALTH, HE VEHMENTLY
ATTACKED ARTICLE 35 OF THE GOS CONSTITUTION, THE PRESIDENTIAL
SUCCESSION CLAUSE. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION, THE PDS BOYCOTTED COMMITTEE
MEETINGS AND THEN DEMONSTRAITIVELY WALKED OUT AUGUST 11 IN

PROTEST OVER "LACK OF DEMOCRACY IN SENEGAL." PRIOR TO THE WALK-OUT FARO NDIAYE, PARLIAMENTARY LEADER OF THE PDS EXPLAINED THE MOVE TO THE ASSEMBLY. HE CITED SEVERAL DIFFERENT OCCASIONS WHEN THE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT HAD REFUSED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PDS DURING DEBATE, AND CHARGED THAT THE PUBLICLY OWNED MEDIA HAS REFUSED TO COVER PDS POSITIONS IN NEWSPAPER REPORTS AND TELEVISION BROADCASTS. THESE INCLUDED THE PDS ANNUAL CONVENTION, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON SENDING TROOPS TO SHABA, AND THE PDS INTERVENTIONS DURING THE FIRST DAY OF THE PLENARY SESSION, AUGUST 7TH.

3. ABDOULEYE WADE, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PDS, REPEATED THE SAME CONCERNs DURING HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON AUGUST 14TH. "THIS CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS THREAT TO DEMOCRACY" WADE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES. "WE CANNOT STAND FOR A DICTATORSHIP, OR EVEN A SEMI-DICTATORSHIP." ALTHOUGH "LE SOLEIL" THE SEMI-OFFICIAL DAILY HAD BARELY MENTIONED THE PDS WALK-OUT IN THEIR COVERAGE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, IT DID PRESENT A FAIR DESCRIPTION OF MR. WADE'S PRESS CONFERENCE.

4. AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WADE, RESTATED HIS VEHEMENT OPPOSITION TO ARTICLE 35 OF THE GOS CONSTITUTION. ARTICLE 35 STIPULATES THAT IN CASE THE PRESIDENT RESIGNS, DIES, OR IS OTHERWISE INCAPACITATED AND UNABLE TO FULFILL THE OBLIGATIONS OF HIS OFFICE, THE PRIME MINISTER WILL FINISH OUT THE PRESIDENT'S TERM. THIS ARTICLE BECOMES AN INCREASINGLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROMINENT ISSUE AS RUMOURS OF SENGHOR'S ILL HEALTH GAIN MOMENTUM AND POPULAR CREDENCE. ARGUES WADE, "POWER CANNOT BE INHERITED. THE PEOPLE WHO HAD THE MATURITY TO ELECT SENGHOR HAVE THE MATURITY TO CHOOSE HIS SUCCESSOR."

5. WADE CRITICIZED THE 14 LAWS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE ON ECONOMIC GROUNDS (SEPTEL), BUT DID NOT PRESENT AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM. HE SCOFFED AT THE IDEA OF A NATIONAL SOLIDARITY DAY. (THIS DAY WAS PROPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT AS A MEASURE TO INCREASE ITS REVENUES THROUGH THE CONTRIBUTION BY EMPLOYED WORKERS OF A DAY'S SALARY AND AN EXTRA CONTRIBUTION FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY.) HE WONDERED WHEN AND/OR IF THE RURAL PEASANTS WOULD EVER SEE ANY OF THE 600 MILLION CFA COLLECTED.

6. WADE ALSO COMMENTED ON THE FACT THAT THE 1979 BUDGET WAS PASSED JUST OVER 2 MONTHS AGO. ACCORDING TO WADE, THE GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME DID NOT WANT TO ADMIT TO THE FULL MAGNITUDE OF THE EFFECTS OF THE DROUGHT. HE ALSO SAID THAT SENEGAL'S TWO 600 MEN BATTALIONS HAD BARELY LEFT FOR SHABA AND LEBANON. THE MOST OBVIOUS SOLUTION TO A FAST APPROACHING PROBLEM OF AN EMPTY TREASURY WOULD HAVE BEEN TO CALL BACK THE TROOPS.

7. WADE NOTED PDS WALK-OUT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A PERMANENT
WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. HE FULLY EXPECTED THE
PDS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OCTOBER SESSION.

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Message Attributes

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